

Teach 4 the Heart Podcast Transcript

Episode 358 – How Your Job Matters for Eternity (Even When You’re Not Sharing the Gospel)

Linda Kardamis (00:00)

Teacher, your job, what you do day in and day out, it matters for eternity, even when you're not sharing the gospel. Today, we're gonna talk about why. Well, welcome back to the Teach 4 the Heart podcast, where we tackle teaching challenges from a biblical perspective. Why are we here? Because we don't believe that our spiritual walk and teaching profession should exist in two separate domains. Rather, the hope we have in Christ should change how we approach everything, not just at home, but at school as well.

So join us as we explore both the spiritual and practical sides of key teaching challenges, integrating them together so we can succeed at teaching, glorify God, and make a lasting difference in our students' hearts and lives. This episode is brought to you in partnership with the Herzog Foundation. We also want to thank our sponsor, Dordt University. Unlock the science of reading with Dordt University at a free webinar on October 15th.

This webinar will help you explore how to use data to make targeted teaching decisions and incorporate high impact instructional routines. You will leave with a clearer understanding of the research behind reading development, gain practical strategies for greater instructional impact, and tools for purposeful assessment. Register today at [dordt.edu / webinars](http://dordt.edu/webinars). That's D-O-R-D-T dot E-D-U / webinars.

Today, we're going to be sharing with you a clip from last year's summit, a conversation we had with Jordan Raynor around why our work matters for eternity, not just when we're sharing Christ, but no matter what we're doing. And before we get to that, I wanna tell you first of all, if you are not signed up yet for the Rise Up Summit, I really, really hope that you'll join us this year. ~ Everything is completely free the weekend of the event, or you can get an all access pass.

Purchase an all access pass that will give you access to all the sessions forever. ~ regardless of which option you choose, can also kind of choose, man, I want to watch every session or I just want to watch one session. So I know there will be at least one session that you will not want to miss. There's so many great topics over there. And once again, it's completely free to sign up and to attend the weekend of the event. So please go to riseupchristianeducators.com and sign up if you haven't done so yet.

And then today, as I said, I want to play you guys a clip, a longer clip, about a 10, 13 minute clip from last year's summit session with Jordan Raynor because this session was so amazing. And in this clip,

he is really talking about why your job matters for eternity, even when you're not sharing the gospel. Because I do think sometimes we fall into this trap of thinking that, you know, some of our work is like done for God and actually matters, and then some stuff doesn't.

I mean, I had a great conversation with the student. I was able to really help them and impact their life, whether I got to share the gospel or whether I just really made a difference and I could tell, okay, man, this moment really mattered. But doing my grading, cleaning up my room, laminating, making copies, that doesn't really matter. It's not really that important, right? And it's the same thing sometimes we feel at home. I'm just doing the dishes. I'm just cleaning the house. This doesn't really matter. But Jordan argues that is not true.

~ And he actually has a book that these thoughts are coming from called *The Sacredness of Secular Work*. The sacredness of secular work for ways your job matters for eternity even when you're not sharing the gospel. And he's talking here about how God delights in everything we do, every detail of our life, no matter what. It doesn't have to be, quote unquote, spiritual for it to matter. And how it's really not about what we're doing for our work.

Right, I mean, think about, everybody has different professions, right? Some people are doctors and lawyers and nurses. We are teachers or educators, know, there's people that are custodians, homemakers. There's all just all so many different jobs out there and it's not, you know, certain jobs God is more pleased with, but it's rather who you are doing the work with and who you are doing it for. And if we're bringing God into,

those moments with us, right? And because we have the Holy Spirit, everything we do should be done with God and for God. And so nothing we do is absent from him or quote unquote secular. So this is kind of some of the background that we talked about before this clip, but I'm gonna go ahead and send you over there right now. Once again, he's gonna jump right into the four ways your job matters for eternity, even when you're not sharing the gospel. Enjoy this clip and then I'll come back at the end to wrap us up.

Jordan Raynor (04:44)

when I tell a teacher or a barista,

or an entrepreneur like me that their work matters for eternity. The most typical response I hear is, yeah, amen Jordan. My job is my mission field. Right. And that is, listen, that is of course gloriously true. But if the only way your work matters for eternity is because you can use your job to quote unquote, the gospel, then frankly, most of us are wasting 99.9 % of our time. I don't know about you. I find that to be deeply, deeply depressing, but more importantly,

It's deeply, deeply unbiblical. Psalm 37 23 says that the Lord directs the steps of the godly and delights in every detail of their lives. In other words, God doesn't just delight in watching you teacher share the gospel with an unbelieving teacher in the teacher's lounge, right? He doesn't just delight in watching you write a check to the missionaries pictured on your refrigerator.

He delights in every lesson you plan, in every Zoom meeting you lead, in every single thing you do in a godly way. Those are all ingredients into the eternal pleasure of God. So my heart is for every believer to see how 100 % of their time at work matters for eternity, not just the 1 % they spend sharing the gospel.

Linda Kardamis (06:15)

Yeah, and that's so powerful because I do think a lot of teachers and a lot of us, right, we do think, okay, this matters. I can see it. I had this moment or I was able to specifically share something that maybe would lead. And I think we're just so hyper focused in on that one aspect. And we're like, does the rest of this really matter? So what do you think keeps Christians from seeing ~ kind of the sacredness in all those other pieces?

Jordan Raynor (06:40)

Yeah, this will be a controversial answer. And if you want the fuller answer, you can, ~ we could dig into it if you'd like, but I would argue at the root of this is that for the last few hundred years of church history, for the first and only time in church history, we have begun treating the great commission to save souls, make disciples as the singular mission of the Christian life. And let me state this as clearly as I possibly claim.

can, lest I be labeled a heretic here. The Great Commission is indeed great. It's a non-optional command for every single follower of Jesus, right? But it's not the only commission of the Christian life. In fact, I quote in the book, these theologians from the very conservative Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, who say that before 400 years ago, nobody ever interpreted the Great Commission to make disciples

As the mission of the Christian life ever. is brand new in church thinking, but here's the problem. If as so many of our pastors and religious leaders have ~ led us to believe, I don't think maliciously, right? But have led us to believe that the great commission is the end all be all the Christian life. Then the work of a teacher doesn't matter in the grand scheme of eternity. Unless he or she gets that very rare once in a decade chance to lead some lost person to Jesus Christ. Right.

Again, that's deeply depressing, but that's not what we see in scripture. In fact, Jesus himself said, therefore go and make disciples dot dot dot teaching them to obey everything I have commanded them to do, including, by the way, love your neighbor as yourself, which is a complete statement. And isn't that what teachers do all day, every day, love their little neighbors as they want to be loved themselves and that

is good and eternally significant, even when it doesn't lead you to a chance to walk somebody through the Romans road.

Linda Kardamis (08:44)

Yeah, and I do think this is a when you first said this to me I said, wow, that is just something really helpful to recognize just how how elevated the Great Commission has become and not that it needs to be de elevated, correct, but that all these other commands are not. It's not like they're less than this. Correct. And so all these other things that God calls us to it's not like, okay, I did, you know, I'm following God every moment, but I didn't get to share the gospel today. So today was a waste, right?

Jordan Raynor (09:11)

And by the way, let's not forget that that term great commission is not a part of the biblical manuscripts. It is a manmade heading that according to the preface to my NIV Bible says is not to be regarded as part of the biblical text. This chart, and by the way, this term is brand new in church. It was invented 200 years ago by Hudson Taylor as a marketing slogan to recruit people to move to China as missionaries, which that praise God that people did. Right.

But we gotta be careful with these man-made headings that they don't lead us to stray into false theologies that treat everything else we do in this life as a waste in the grand scheme of eternity.

Linda Kardamis (10:00)

America turns 250 years old next summer. And as we approach this incredible milestone, the Herzog Foundation is launching the Freedom Tour—a national event series celebrating the history and hope of America. It's a powerful reminder that our freedoms—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—aren't government-made, they're God-given.

The Freedom Tour invites you to experience how faith shaped our founding- and to carry that message into your classrooms, your homes, and your communities.

And that's not all. Starting this summer, the Herzog Foundation is also releasing a new video series called Faith & Freedom 250. Every Friday, you'll hear voices from across America—teachers, parents, pastors, and leaders—sharing powerful stories from our nation's history and reminding us why our founding values still matter today. Learn more and follow along at FreedomTour250.com.

Linda Kardamis (10:58)

So as you're listening, this is like, okay, this is great. This is kind of great news. You know, what I'm doing matters no matter what, but we might be thinking, okay, but how, what does that look like? And I your book is subtitled, Four Ways Your Job Matters for Eternity, Even When You're Not Sharing the Gospel. So can we dive into some of those ways?

Jordan Raynor (11:16)

Let's do it. Number one, your work matters for eternity because it is a vehicle for bringing God eternal pleasure. Now this is crazy because God doesn't need us to do anything for him, but in his goodness, he allows for his children to contribute to his eternal pleasure based on how we live this life. already quoted Psalm 37 23, the Lord directs the steps of the godly and delights in every detail of their lives. When you do your work with excellence,

and love and in accordance with God's commands that contributes to the eternal pleasure of your Heavenly Father. That's the first and most fundamental way, mind-blowing way. work matters for eternity. Here's the second. Your work matters for eternity because it is largely through your work that you earn eternal rewards. And we're not talking about earning salvation here, right? But man, we in the church do not talk about eternal rewards today, which is kind of crazy because

Jesus talked about them non-stop, over and over and over again in the gospels. He's commanding his followers to sacrifice in the present so that they might earn eternal rewards like treasures and crowns and increased job responsibilities on the new earth. And the way we work today is a big part of what contributes

to those eternal rewards. Number three, your work matters for eternity because I think through our jobs, we can scratch off the thin veil metaphorically between heaven and earth, revealing glimpses of the kingdom of God in the present mysteriously. And then finally, number four, your work matters for eternity because yes, you can leverage it to the instrumental end of sharing the gospel with those you work with. And I would argue history would argue

that it is not pastors and donor supportive missionaries who are most effective at the Great Commission. It is mere Christians working as teachers, working as entrepreneurs, working as marketers who will do the most for the advancement of the gospel through God's grace. And while that is far from the only way your work matters for eternity, it is certainly a way. And so we better get really, really good at this, especially in this increasingly post-Christian context.

Linda Kardamis (13:41)

Yes. Okay. Wow. This there is so much there. And obviously this is why I get the book dive into all of this with Jordan. Can I go back to number three though? You talked about kind of you can pierce that thin veil. Can you expound on that and share a little bit about what you mean by that?

Jordan Raynor (13:55)

Yeah, I'd love to. This is a this is definitely the most mysterious of the four ways. And I'm not going to act like I've got it all figured out. But the analogy I use in the book that's been helpful to me is think about think about the scratch off paper. There are kids love. I don't know if your kids love this. Linda, my kids love this. That leaves black residue all over my house on the surface. These scratch. I'm talking to teachers. You know exactly what I'm talking about. Right on the surface. These scratch off look like dull pieces of black paper.

But when our kids rub the surface with a stylus or a quarter, that thin dark veil fades away and reveals a really beautiful picture on the other side. I think that's a picture of the Christian life. I think that through our jobs, through our lives, we could serve as a stylus of sorts, scratching off what doesn't belong in the eternal kingdom of God, planting what does so that people can get a glimpse of the kingdom of God on the other side. Let me give you an example of what this looks like.

Let's say, ~ let's say you're a teacher committed to the public school system. I would argue that's an act of justice in some ways, right? You are scratching off a day, a glimpse of the day when the God of justice will reign supreme. Even if you never use that language, you are scratching off this desire for justice and righteousness just by choosing to work in hard places. All right, let's say you're, ~ I have a friend who's a hairstylist.

Right her name is chassiss chassiss interest when chassiss creates beauty as a hairstylist She is planting a seed in people's hearts for the day in which Beauty will cover the face of the earth which will only be found ultimately in Jesus Christ see Revelation 21 right? Let's say you're let's hear a principle and You're working in these crazy times without fear

without anxiety, with just transcendent peace that can only be described by your apprenticeship to Jesus Christ, you are scratching off a glimpse of the day when anxiety will be no more. See Isaiah 32 verse four, you are rubbing off more of that scratch off and giving people just a taste, just a glimpse to what their appetite is, something that they will crave until they find it in full.

in the person of Jesus Christ.

Linda Kardamis (16:26)

Wow, yes. And that is really powerful, right? And I think I love this way you're saying it almost as, yeah, this picture of the kingdom and picture of what God is trying to do. think I maybe also heard this described as almost like pushing back the curse a little bit, Kind of like, what is this? We are in the curse and just kind of partnering in God and what it would have looked like without that and have these little glimpses of that. Yeah, I love that. ~

Jordan Raynor (16:51)

For a long time I believe Linda that okay great. I'm on the other side of Easter I'm in between Easter and Revelation 21 and the New Jerusalem dropping down from the sky and my job is to just sit on my hands away for it to happen That's not the story of scripture read Acts chapter 1 the disciples were like, okay Jesus Are you gonna bring the kingdom in full? He's like no, no, no, no, will be my witnesses. And yes, that means evangelism But it means way more than evangelism Tim Keller

pointed out that to be Jesus's witnesses is to implement his kingship and his kingdom in every square inch of creation in the school system, in our neighborhoods, in culture, in media. We are actively partnering with Christ in the renewal of all things. And as we do, we are playing trailers for a watching world of the kingdom that is to come.

Linda Kardamis (17:48)

I hope you guys enjoyed this conversation with Jordan Raynor. I love just his passion and just these important thoughts about how much what you do really, really matters for eternity. How much God cares about what you do day in, day out, moment by moment in the classroom. I hope this was really an encouragement to you. And if you've enjoyed this session, I hope you'll do two things. First of all, I

hope that you'll share this episode with a friend and tell them about it. And number two, I hope that you will...

Sign up for the Rise Up Summit for more amazing sessions just like this one that you just heard. Once again, that's at riseupchristianeducators.com. And we really look forward to sharing more encouragement and ideas with you there as well. Well, this episode has been brought to you in partnership with the Herzog Foundation. All views and opinions are our own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Herzog Foundation. If you'd like the notes and links from this episode, you can get them at [teachfortheheart.com /358](http://teachfortheheart.com/358)

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